
NEWS From:

Congressman Mike Honda

FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA

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Lofgren, Honda Secure Needed Funding for Silicon Valley Water Projects

Silicon Valley Legislators Work Together to obtain \$16.8 million for Santa Clara Watershed

Washington, DC— Today, Reps. Zoe Lofgren (D-San Jose), and Mike Honda (D-San Jose) announced that they have secured \$16.8 million in federal funding for a host of important water projects in Silicon Valley. These projects are designed to control flooding, protect sensitive habitat and wildlife while allowing residents to enjoy local natural resources within the Santa Clara Valley watershed. In the last several years, flooding along the Guadalupe River and other local creeks has caused extensive damage to area homes, schools, businesses and highways. In the mid 1990's, severe flooding inundated more than 300 buildings causing an estimated \$6 million in damage. The area remains vulnerable to severe flooding until these flood control projects are completed.

“Building environmentally responsible flood protection projects in Santa Clara County costs much more than local tax dollars could ever afford. Funding must be a three-legged stool, with local tax dollars attracting state and federal funding,” said Tony Estremera, chairman of the Santa Clara Valley Water District board of directors. **“Because of the efforts of Congressman Mike Honda and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, many important projects throughout the county will remain on track to protect hundreds of thousands of homes, schools and businesses from flooding, while improving habitat in local creeks for Chinook salmon, steelhead trout and other endangered wildlife.”**

“I am very proud that Congresswoman Lofgren and I were able to successfully secure the needed resources to help protect our Silicon Valley families, homes and businesses from the continuing threat of severe flooding that has caused so much damage over the past several years,” said Honda. **“Making sure that we commit adequate funding to protect our rivers and streams while enabling our communities to enjoy these natural treasures has long been a top priority of mine— today’s legislation is a strong step in the right direction.”**

Today’s legislation includes \$300,000 in funding for the Upper Guadalupe River flood protection project that will protect more than 2,300 acres of land and more than 7,500 homes, schools and businesses in the heart of San Jose from an estimated \$280 million in damages that could result from flooding. Once completed, this project will enable state and local agencies to safely build hiking and biking trails that connect from the Almaden Valley area to downtown San Jose. The project will also protect the endangered Chinook salmon and steelhead trout by enabling them to travel upstream from the San Francisco Bay to their natural spawning grounds and by creating shaded areas to protect young fish from dying due to overexposure to direct sunlight. **[more..]**

The bill also provides \$10 million in funding to keep the \$226 million Guadalupe River flood protection and environmental restoration project on track. The area protected by this project extends from Interstate 880 to Interstate 280— an area that suffered more than \$10 million in flood damage to 300 homes, businesses and roadways in 1995. The \$10 million secured by Honda and Lofgren will allow this important project to be completed by 2004.

While a Member of the California Assembly, Congressman Honda authored legislation that secured state-level funding for flood protection along the Upper Guadalupe River. This Sunday, Mr. Honda will be hosting a “Hike with Mike” event where he lead “nature and conservation” hikes along the Los Alamitos Creek around Lake Almaden for school children and area residents. Mr. Honda, a former public high school science teacher, will talk with the group about the importance of environmental conservation and give an update on the status of environmental legislation in the United States Congress.

Other funded projects for fiscal year 2002 include:

1. Upper Penitencia Creek flood control project (\$400,000)
2. Llagas Creek flood protection Project (\$500,000)
3. Coyote Creek and Berryessa creeks flood protection project (\$750,000)
4. San Jose Water Reclamation and Reuse project (\$4.5 million)
5. Santa Clara Watershed Management Initiative (\$225,000)
6. Coyote Creek at Rock Spring Neighborhood Creek flood protection project (\$113,000)